

EDITORIAL.

FOR YEARS the *Journal of Botany* has annually had its fling at the Reports of the Missouri Botanic Garden, and the November number affords the last example of this unpleasant spirit. Usually with little or nothing to say of the scientific papers beyond faint commendation, the editor has devoted his energies to ridiculing the annual flower sermon and the post-prandial eloquence at the annual banquet. Unfortunately, since they are embodied in a will, the eccentric ideas of the dead Englishman have to be carried out as rigorously as his beneficent ones are executed gladly. And we may be permitted to suggest to the editor that his own island house so abounds in transparent follies of the same sort that it is really not becoming in him to pelt our few imported windows.

THIS NUMBER of the *Journal* has also its stale gibe at "the reforming zeal of our transatlantic friends", which it now sees manifesting itself in the formation of the Botanical Society of America. Just what connection the organization of this society has with our "reforming zeal" we imagine it would be hard for the editor to state; but he has thrust in his innuendo and his readers are given to understand that this also is part of a huge farce which is being enacted in the transatlantic wilds in the name of botany.

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THAT SAME reforming zeal, which seems so ridiculous in the eyes of our "British-and-foreign" friend, vaunteth not itself and is not puffed up, spite of the good it is accomplishing and the promise and potency of more. It has a most simple mission; it aims only to secure as great accuracy and uniformity of usage as users of botanical language may feel inclined to adopt. It brings together a considerable number of botanists, who, having in view present usage, agree that it is desirable to follow certain principles in nomenclature, or in citation, or in terminology, or in pronunciation. This agreement coerces no one, it denounces no one, it asks no one to acknowledge its "authority." Still less have "its supporters . . . a case to prove" as the authors of the *Flora of Mt. Desert* assert. The parties to the agreement have only to submit its principles, clearly enunciated, to those interested, and let each determine whether he is willing by adopting them to be "dictated to by a comparatively few botanists"; or whether he will follow other principles, or none at all. The choice is a simple one, and our friends that follow not with us need not fash themselves over the source of our authority to cast out devils.